



Notes FROM UnderGrad

Eurasian
Undergraduate
Exchange
Program

Regional Conferences 2004 Special Edition

Combating Trafficking in Persons: Domestic, Regional and International Cooperation

Moldova
March 26-28, 2004

Sixty university students and recent graduates from Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova spent the weekend of March 26-28, 2004, developing action plans they can implement to prevent human trafficking in their countries. The three-day conference was designed by alumni of the Eurasian Undergraduate Exchange Program (formerly the FSA Undergraduate Program) and featured the active participation of alumni throughout the entire weekend. Following welcoming remarks made by U.S. Ambassador to Moldova Heather Hodges, the keynote address was delivered by Diana Pinzescu, a 1995 alumna of the exchange program and the U.S. Embassy's law enforcement and legal assistant. Ms. Pinzescu works directly with NGOs and other agencies fighting trafficking on behalf of the U.S. government, and has come into contact with many of the survivors of human trafficking in Moldova. Her advice to the alumni was to use the victims' stories as the most powerful tool in the information awareness campaign they are to carry out, and to make sure to inform teenagers in their countries about the "truth of the 'luxurious' life of living abroad."

During the second and third days, professional trainers and representatives of NGOs working on anti-trafficking projects in the region delivered an intense program of information outreach techniques to conference participants. The four training programs available were:

1. Working with Children: Training by Youth Development Centre, Moldova, and National High School Debate League, Moldova
2. Working with Young Women: Training by the Center for Prevention of Trafficking in Women, Moldova
3. Working with NGOs and Educators: Training by La Strada, the International Center for Women's Rights' Protection and Promotion, Moldova
4. Working with Families and Communities: Training by Women's Perspectives, Ukraine

Olexander Martynenko and Katya Nalyvayko take their turn at the "footprints" exercise in Moldova.

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From the Field

Dear Alumni:

As your program manager at the U.S. Department of State, it gives me great pleasure to write to you. This year's regional conferences were exceptional in their content, in your participation and most importantly in your vision for the future. And while the conferences only lasted a few days, I know the residual effect of your conference work continues to impact your lives and communities.

I applaud your honesty and willingness to put your voice forward through your conference resolutions and projects. It takes guts to let others know that as a community you offer a future built on resolving conflicts, bridging cultures and understanding diversity. It takes strength to say as a group we will do our part to stop the trafficking of women and children. It takes vision to look inward at identity and build outward with tangible projects.

What distinguishes you from your peers is as Martin Luther King, Jr., once said, "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." You stand in the present, your eyes on tomorrow's hope. Your tenacity and leadership hold you up through challenge and controversy and keep you motivated during the quiet and peace. I commend your spirit and your resolve.

Your task is not easy. You don't get a grade as an alumnus. You don't get to stay with a host family and have turkey at Thanksgiving. You don't get to ride the Greyhound Bus across the country. But you do get the opportunity to challenge old assumptions and change your countries' destinies. You get the prospect of a future that takes your shape and ideas. As Eleanor Roosevelt, the wife of President Delano Franklin Roosevelt, wrote, "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

Thank you for sharing your dreams.

Warmest regards and best wishes,

Lucy Jilka
Bureau of Educational
and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State

About THE Newsletter

Notes from UnderGrad is a forum for the Eurasian Undergraduate Exchange Program community to express views and share the Undergraduate experience. Published three times a year, the newsletter is sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State and produced by American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS in conjunction with the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX).

About the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs conducts educational and training exchange programs with Eurasia with the aim of fostering mutual understanding between the United States and the countries of Eurasia. Authorized through the Fulbright-Hays Act and the FREEDOM Support Act, the FSA Undergraduate Program is designed to foster democratization and economic development in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

How to Participate - See yourself in Print. Here's How!

Open Forum | Have something to share with the Undergraduate community? Submit personal essays on your experience with the program, thoughts on international politics or current affairs, or statements about your academic or professional challenges. Essays should be 300 words or less.

Point of View | We know you have an opinion. Tell us what it is! Stay tuned for the *Point of View Question* by email and through the new list-serve groups.yahoo.com/group/NotesfromUnderGrad/. Essays should be 300 words or less. Photos strongly encouraged.

Upward Mobility | What have you done for yourself lately? Tell us about your promotions, participation in conferences, professional and academic achievements. Submissions should be 100 words or less.

In the Community | What have you done for your community? Let us know about your community service either in the U.S. or at home. Submissions should be 200 words or less.

Photo Gallery | A picture is worth a thousand words. Tell us your Undergraduate story in either electronic or hard copy photographs. We'd like to see you at alumni events, conferences and workshops, professional and community service activities. Include descriptions of the event and names of all individuals in the photo. Please send hard copy photographs with return address information so they can be returned to you.

Websites | Do you have an alumni website or website of interest to the Undergraduate alumni community? Submit your URL to the editorial committee with a one-sentence description of the site. All approved sites will be printed in upcoming issues of *Notes from UnderGrad*.

Did we forget something? Submit ideas for new sections and other ideas about *Notes from UnderGrad*.

The Editorial Committee will take all letters into consideration.

Submission Guidelines

In Russia and Eurasia, please submit materials to ugradalum@actr.ru or millman@americancouncils.org. Submissions may be edited for style and language. Not all essays submitted will be printed. All submissions must include name, year of participation in program, university attended and contact information including email address.

In the United States, please submit materials to jilkalm@state.gov or asantimore@irex.org.

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS
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Notes from UnderGrad Editorial Committee and Contact Information

Lucy Jilka, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C. (jilkalm@state.gov)

Katya Turkina, American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS, Moscow (ugradalum@actr.ru)

Alissa Millman, ACTR/ACCELS, Washington, D.C. (millman@americancouncils.org)

Aimee Santimore, International Research & Exchanges Board, Washington, D.C. (asantimore@irex.org)

Dallas Shelby, Design, ACTR/ACCELS, Washington, D.C. (shelby@americancouncils.org)

Conference

East or West? Where to Go? Political, Economic, and Cultural Self-Determination in the Caucasus

April 15-17, 2004

Undergraduate alumni from the countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia gathered in Tbilisi from April 15-17, 2004, for a regional conference called, "East or West? Where to Go? Political, Economic, and Cultural Self-Determination in the Caucasus." Ten alumni were selected from each of the three countries and asked to prepare presentations on a range of regional issues.

The conference began with a discussion of the Georgian Rose Revolution by Gogi Khutsishvili, a professor of Peace and Conflict Studies at Tbilisi State University. Judging by the enthusiastic response to his address, this topic was very much on the minds of delegates at the start of the three-day conference. Mr. Khutsishvili said that history would have to decide whether the recent elections in Georgia represented a true revolution or not, but he was firm in his belief that the impetus for change had come from within Georgia. Although his presentation was relatively short, Professor Khutsishvili answered questions for an additional 45 minutes, as alumni queried their guest on the nuances of the Georgian and regional political situation.

While a wide variety of questions were posed during the topic discussions that ensued, individual debates were structured and informed by the expertise and helpful guidance of individual alumni presenters. Each had been tasked with researching a particular issue and then presenting to the entire group. After each presentation, another delegate responded to the preceding address by elaborating on key issues, asking pointed questions, and steering the ensuing discussion toward identifiable objectives. The first day of the conference was devoted to questions of political trends in the Caucasus. Here there was lively debate about the desirability and feasibility of closer ties with the European Union and NATO. Other presenters spoke to how the region might benefit and work with both European and Asian neighbors. Days two and three of the conference addressed economic and cultural issues, including such topics as the prospects for economic growth, the role of

oil in the development of the regional economy, and the pros and cons of globalization. Cultural presenters discussed the phenomena of Eastern and Western influences in the respective countries, gender issues and the prospects for integrating higher education more closely with other European neighbor countries.

At the end of each day, key discussants met briefly to record the consensus forged during the debate. Resolution writers were also careful to note where they lacked consensus, and where matters of national diversity did not meld easily into identifiable solutions. Although difficult issues of national identity and regional conflict were addressed, delegates were diplomatic and communicative, without giving in to fallacies or overly rosy scenarios or predictions. The final resolution reflected the desire of delegates to continue "open and constructive political, economic and cultural dialogue on the regional level." It also specifically called for the governments of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia to work together to improve the overall economic climate, press for educational reforms, and to cooperate more extensively with organizations such as the EU and NATO. These and other steps, the resolution concluded, "will contribute to the creation of a peaceful and stable South Caucasus region."



The Caucasus conference took place in beautiful Tbilisi (above). Participants received certificates after days of hard work (below).





"I believe that the annual regional conference of Undergraduate alumni from the South Caucasus is of incredible importance. It not only presents alumni with opportunities to keep in touch and to establish new relationships with students from different countries, but encourages and endorses the development and the establishment of cooperation among our countries. Such cooperation begins on the alumni level, who will be among the leaders and professionals in their countries. This conference gives a chance to learn the opinions of fellow alumni, representing the youth of their country, which hopefully can lead to closer and more trustworthy relations."

Nelli Babayan, '03

A panel member at the conference explains her position on the future of the region's partnerships

Further emphasizing the importance of creating a favorable economic milieu for attracting foreign investments into the South Caucasus,

Fully aware of the ethnic, religious, and linguistic diversity in the region,

Realizing the necessity to build bridges and to promote cultural interaction among the three societies,

Recognizing the pressing need for reforms in the educational systems of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia,

Calls upon the South Caucasian states to spare no efforts to ingrain a conciliatory atmosphere within the respective societies to develop a more balanced and consensus-based approach towards conflict resolution;

Stresses that democratization of the South Caucasus is one of the preconditions of peaceful conflict resolution and stability in the region,

Recommends Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia to cooperate more actively with international organizations such as the European Union and NATO to share the experience of member states of those organizations in economic, political, and security spheres;

Calls upon the states of South Caucasus to undertake comprehensive legislative reforms and to bring their legislation in line with EU standards;

Encourages the governments of the respective states to create a secure environment for economic growth;

Strongly recommends Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia to foster intra-regional trade and investment as a starting point for future regional integration;

Declares that the region of the South Caucasus is not a fault line of clashing civilizations;

Stresses the importance of mutual cultural awareness and free flow of information;

Urges the respective governments to effectively implement the educational system reforms with the active participation of the student community including Undergraduate alumni.

Outcomes

The transitional period has created a range of serious political, economic, and social problems that constantly destabilize the Caucasus. The solutions to these problems have to be comprehensive and mutually beneficial for each republic. The conference aims were to reveal causes and to find possible solutions to some vital regional issues. The alumni from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia got to know each other better. They had a chance to discuss issues concerning the entire region. The tangible result of the conference was a resolution compiled by the participants of the conference:

Resolution

Undergraduate Caucasus/Res/1/4
Sponsors: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia

Subject: East or West: Where to go? Political, Economic and Cultural Self Determination in the Caucasus

The Political, Economic and Cultural commitments,

Recalling the Resolution adopted by the first Undergraduate Caucasus Regional Conference,

Welcoming the efforts of the Undergraduate alumni community to foster open and constructive political, economic, and cultural dialogue on the regional level,

Underlining the importance of peaceful coexistence and cohabitation of all South Caucasian countries based on just and equitable resolution of the regional conflicts meeting the interests of the states involved,

Emphasizing the positive influence of the regional economic integration as well as political and cultural cooperation on the welfare and prosperity of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia,

Annex to Resolution 1/4

We propose the following steps to achieve the goals set forth in the resolution:

- Create an inter-Caucasian forum where heads of state, relevant ministry representatives, parliament members, and representatives of the judicial branch meet regularly to discuss the common issues and possible integration. The suggested frequency of the meetings is twice per year.
- Secure the fairness and transparency of elections; make necessary amendments to the elections codes so that they are in line with OSCE standards; and train the central and district election commission members to uphold the above standards. It is important to ensure unhindered access of both domestic and international observers to all the election districts and to take into account their recommendations.
- Harmonize the legislation concerning the economic sphere of the three countries (e.g. tax, customs, environmental) with a view of easing the prospective economic integration.
- Carry out reforms to make the judicial branch more independent. Ensure that the system of checks and balances among the three government branches (executive, legislative, judicial) function properly.
- Continue the process of decentralization of power through the further empowerment of the local governments (municipalities), particularly ensure that the heads of municipalities (mayors and governors) are elected and not appointed by the central government.
- Speed up the privatization process of medium and large enterprises in a fair and transparent manner. Privatize and consolidate publicly owned banks to achieve economies of scale and to increase lending to the private sector at lower interest rates.
- Reduce the tax burden for small and medium enterprises to reduce tax evasion and stimulate investment. Reform the tax administration so as to achieve higher tax collection rates and reduce the role of the "informal sector" in economic activity.
- Reduce licensing requirements and the length of time required to process a license for start-up businesses.
- Fully aware of the lack of consensus regarding the issue of opening up regional trade before the current conflict is resolved, we offer that countries with good relationships (Georgia and Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan) deepen their trade links and be prepared for the opening up of all borders. We also encourage external actors to remain neutral in their mediation efforts.
- With a view of creating a customs union in the future, unify the external customs duties and prepare a program to eliminate the customs duties among the countries.
- Develop civic education programs to raise the awareness of citizens about their civil, political, social, and cultural rights. Design classes at high schools related to civic education. Encourage campaigns by NGOs to spread information about human rights.
- Start inter-Caucasian student exchange programs among educational institutions in order to prevent misperceptions and encourage cultural understanding and tolerance. Add Caucasian language and culture courses to curricula; encourage research institutes to research Caucasian cultural heritage.
- Develop joint web sites for tourism purposes in order to attract visitors to the region.
- It is our belief that these steps will contribute to the creation of a peaceful and stable South Caucasus region and will speed up the accession of the region to the wider European family.

"It is most important that people are willing to participate in such open dialogues. They are ready to make compromises."

David Kapanadze,
Alumni Fellow

"These youth might be in the government some day. This could serve as the basis for future conflict resolution."

Keti Botchorishvili,
alumni coordinator,
American Councils

A Muskie alumnus from Azerbaijan serves as a moderator at the regional conference.





"This conference is like a family reunion."

Stephen Guice
Acting Public Affairs
Officer, U.S.
Embassy.

"I believe the topic of the conference (regional security) was very genuine and important for alumni-representatives of CA states. It's great that the event provided space for open dialogue and strengthened alumni interaction, which will surely help their countries to better cooperate, find compromises and support each other in the regional and international arena."

Katya Turkina
Eurasian
Undergraduate
Program alumni
coordinator,
American
Councils

Regional Security in Central Asia

April 10-12, 2004

Forty alumni of the Eurasian Undergraduate Exchange Program from throughout Central Asia were selected to represent their countries at the April 10-12 discussions related to regional security in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The objective of the conference was to promote mutual understanding among alumni from each Central Asian country and to give them the opportunity to explore solutions to some regional tensions. Each country group put together a formal presentation on their country's security strengths and risks, and gave an overview of the priorities defined by their governments. This set the stage for the young people from these five states, each country sharing similar histories and cultures, to understand the security issues from their neighboring countries' viewpoints, which are often dissimilar. Some of the presentations were entertaining and highly creative, such as the skit performed by the Kyrgyz group that re-enacted a dangerous border crossing scenario or the singing of the Kazakhstani national anthem by that country's group.

Throughout the weekend, the students also took part in panel discussions and lectures by experts in the region that allowed a closer view into the details surrounding their countries' security interests. These formal presentations were designed to more fully prepare the students for the third day of activity: the International Crisis Scenario. The experts' presentations included Yasar Sari, a visiting faculty fellow sponsored by the Civic Education Project, who delivered the "traditional approach" to viewing regional security issues from each nation's perspective. John Clark from the Kazakhstan Institute of Management, Economics and Strategic Research (KIMEP) presented what was perhaps a nontraditional approach to regional security and conflict prevention in Central Asia. The results of his research demonstrated that some of the conventional

"causes" of poverty and instability in a region such as high population growth, geography (whether a country is landlocked), and the "Protestan factor" do not result in conflict. His analysis revealed that the true source of conflict in countries around the world is, in fact, corruption, and inspired the alumni to take steps to work against corruption in their countries. Examples for how to do this include working for non-corrupt institutions or starting a business or initiative on one's own that refuses to take part in any sort of corruption.

The final day of the conference was the most exciting and what the alumni had been working towards: The International Crisis Game Scenario. Each participant was assigned to a team representing a real actor in Central Asian security politics: the teams included presidential administrations, the UN, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), the American government, oil and gas ministries, and others. The alumni had researched their group's interests and politics, and some groups came prepared with costume and prepared strategies. The Crisis Game consisted of a period of nine days over which several crises take place (floods, acts of terrorism, border incidents) and each team had to react to the crises in accordance with their priorities. Each team's actions had to be approved by a "god," played by American Councils, IREX, and ECA staff, as well as guests and local experts, who had to verify that the action was realistic and credible in accordance with that team's declared interests. Teams submitted "open moves" (for all to see) or "secret moves" (for just the "gods" or the

Alumni demonstrate that by leaning on one another, they can form a strong partnership.



The “moves” wall was a popular place during the International Crisis Game.

BBC to see), which introduced critical elements of timing, strategy, and negotiation into the game. After each day, the team played by the BBC presented the day's major news stories, which replicated the role of the media into real world events.

This exercise in real world politics gave the students the opportunity to understand how difficult the issues facing their countries are to resolve, and how important it is to see the issue from another perspective, negotiate with competing actors, and compromise some of your priorities in order to achieve resolution. Although the game was too fast to have time to truly resolve conflicts in a complete manner, there were a few teams that did succeed in preserving peace

within its borders and negotiating new business deals with neighboring states. Each team was awarded with prizes provided by the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy for its contributions to the Crisis Game Scenario. The alumni spent the last evening of the conference at a closing reception, dancing to music from each of the Central Asian countries and making plans for future collaboration and meetings.

continued from page 1

Combating Trafficking in Persons: Domestic, Regional and International Cooperation

On the last day of the conference, each group had synthesized the training they had received and re-developed it for their own audience—high school and university students. Each group was given the opportunity to “try out” their training on another group, in order to test the effectiveness of the methodology and experience the program from the trainer's perspective. The training materials and sample outreach programs will be consolidated into one training manual that will be made available to all alumni for them to use in their future outreach activities. Resolutions developed by the alumni on measures their countries should take in the fight against trafficking will also be included in the manual.

Highlights of the conference include an “Anti-Trafficking Disco” on Friday night and viewing of the film *Lilia 4-Ever* on Saturday night. The disco took place in a popular downtown club, where the DJ stopped the music at regular intervals and involved the audience in contests and skits designed by the alumni to spread the word about the perils of going abroad through untrustworthy channels. The film *Lilia 4-Ever* inspired intense debate among the alumni about the value of using “shock therapy” methods to publicize this issue. The film portrayed the social conditions and economic realities that led to the devastatingly early end to a young girl's life, including her having been tricked into prostitution and slavery in a foreign country. The film was paid for by the government of Sweden, and the discussion was moderated by Sarah Yuska, an American alumna of the U.S. government-sponsored Young Leaders Program and administrator of anti-trafficking programs.

Outcomes

At the conference alumni were trained in how to create and implement training for different target groups. The training materials are being compiled for printing and will be disseminated by Undergraduate alumni over the next year. The resolution submitted by the Moldova team that calls attention to the importance of this issue is included below.

other international and national conventions and resolutions regarding the issue of trafficking and violence in women and children,

Seriously concerned about the growing number of trafficking cases of women and children (especially girls) from Moldova to other countries due to high poverty conditions, unemployment, corruption at all levels, and other social and economic factors particular to Moldova,



Resolution

The Eurasian Undergraduate Exchange Program Alumni,

Supporting the principles set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and

Alumni at the Moldova conference use the “web” game to help express their thoughts.

Welcoming the efforts of the Moldovan Government's Agencies and Departments and Non-Governmental Organizations as well as International Organizations and other public and private entities combating this illegal practice in Moldova,



One of the working groups at the conference in Moldova untangle their web successfully.

"The beneficiaries of the 2004 Regional Eurasian Undergraduate Program Alumni Conference are not only its participants, but also the entire regional (Ukraine/Belarus/Moldova) community who will greatly benefit from this remarkable event. As a result, one of the main goals of all alumni will be achieved: to effectively help your community by helping its members."

Tudor Ulianovschi,
Alumni Fellow from
Moldova

Welcoming also the bilateral, regional, and international cooperation policies and methods addressing the problem of trafficking of women and children,

Emphasizing one more time the need for the Moldovan Government to provide assistance to trafficked persons consistent with human rights standards and international conventions,

1. *Express our determination to join* the efforts of the international organizations in Moldova, among them the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), International Labor Organization (ILO), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), intergovernmental and governmental efforts, especially the efforts of the Moldovan Government including the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education, State Migration Department, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, Customs Department, National Tourism Agency, State Chancellery, Information and Security Service, Statistics and Sociology Department, Information Technology Department, Border Guards Department, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, Center for Combating Economic Crimes and Corruption, Youth and Sports Department, Ministry of Economy, Licensing Chamber, and Prosecutor General's Office, and non-governmental organizations such as the Center for Prevention of Trafficking in Women, La Strada Moldova, Save the Children Moldova, in addressing the problem of trafficking in women and children, and we encourage them to continue this activity and to share their knowledge and best practices as widely as possible;

2. *Note* the importance for Moldova to ratify the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and to make appropriate legislative amendments to ensure full compliance with the provisions of the protocol,

3. *Prompt* the Moldovan Government to take appropriate steps to address the fundamental factors that encourage trafficking in women and children for forced labor, for prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation, in order to eliminate trafficking

in women and children, as well as to provide better protection for them by adopting a National Referral Mechanism which would ensure the protection of the fundamental rights and interests of all trafficked persons, regardless of their will to cooperate with law enforcement and to punish traffickers, through both criminal and civil measures;

4. *Call upon* the Moldovan Government to enforce legal action against trafficking in women and children to condemn traffickers and to bring them to justice, while ensuring that the victims are not criminalized, and to penalize the public officials involved in trafficking;

5. *Call upon* all concerned governments to allocate resources to provide comprehensive programs in Moldova for the victims of trafficking, designed to offer them job training, legal assistance, health care and witness protection, and by cooperating with NGO's in order to ensure their protection, rehabilitation, social reintegration, and access to justice;

6. *Emphasize* the need for a global approach in eradicating trafficking in women and children and encourage governments to develop systematic data-collection methods and to update continuously information on trafficking in women and children, particularly girls, including the analysis of the operating methods of the trafficking channels, and to inform the press about the cases of trafficking encountered in Moldova.

6. *Encourage and stimulate* alumni to volunteer in spreading and distributing information about trafficking and to promote awareness about trafficking to potential victims of trafficking.

Regarding the Resolution adopted by the Eurasian Exchange Program Alumni from Moldova

Comments 1:

As resolutions go, this one covers the bases and is better than most. Calling on the government to adopt the protocol is a good move. You might also call on them (1) to pass the norms that are necessary to implement the anti-trafficking law and (2) to fund the local budgets for the benefit packages referenced in the



law. I would like to see the resolution call on the alumni themselves to take some sort of action themselves.

Tim Correll, Strategic Development and Legal Affairs Consultant, International Organization of Migration, Bucharest. Romania

Comments 2:

The Resolution comes to unify and realize those ideas and directives in the field of combating human beings underlined by the United Nations in a large number of documents, such as: Additional Protocol to the Children's Rights Convention regarding selling of children, prostitution and infantile pornography (adopted by the General Assembly by the U.N. on 25.05.2000, Resolution 54/263 from 25.05.2000); the Protocol regarding the prevention, combating and persecution of trafficking in persons, especially of women and children (it represents the Additional Protocol of the UN Convention against transnational organized crime, 2000); Additional Protocol regarding children in armed conflict, UN Convention regarding child's rights (adopted by the United Nations on 25.05.2000, Resolution 54.2000); Action Platform of the IV Global Conference on trafficking in women, etc.

For the Republic of Moldova, this Resolution will influence the Parliament, Government, governmental and non-governmental organizations to form a united block to deal with combating trafficking in persons, especially women and children; will encourage the Parliament to ratify those international documents that are oriented towards prevention and prosecution of this phenomenon.

Alumni, as one of the best-prepared youth groups in this area, preparation that has also been perfected in the process of the international conference from March 25-27, 2004 in Chisinau, will practice in a more intense manner information spreading activities of the masses regarding trafficking in persons and the necessity to combat this type of crime by the entire population of Moldova, together with state organizations (the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Security and Information Service, Prosecutor's Office, Department of Migration, etc.) authorized to perform these obligations, will practice volunteer activities, etc.

Xenofon Ulianovschi, Judge, Ph.D. in Law, Military Court and Associate Professor, International Independent University of Moldova

Kharkiv alumni fellow Dymtro Grygorenko gets his group's attention during the conference in Moldova.

Russia On The Crossroads: Defining Political, Economic And Cultural Identity

March 12-14, 2004

Forty alumni of the Eurasian Undergraduate Exchange Program were selected to attend a two-day workshop in Moscow that aimed at identifying the major elements contributing to successes and challenges facing Russia in its cultural, political and economic spheres. Three working groups dedicated to each of these topics were moderated by two alumni volunteers. The moderators conducted various training activities for their groups, and the participants also took part in a half-day leadership training and exercises.

The working group sessions began each day with presentations made by specialists in the various fields. The political group heard from Robert Orttung of American University's Transnational Crime and Corruption Center, who presented on the relationship between corruption and civic participation in Russia. Next, Oksana Oracheva, the Moscow director of the Ford Foundation's International Fellows Program, presented on federative reforms in Russia. The cultural group learned of cultural policies and trends from Olga Shlykova of Moscow State University of Culture and Arts (and JFDP alumna), and the economics group learned of regional economic reforms and bureaucracy from Petr Kozma, Deputy Director of the State Academy of Professional Retraining and Development for Managers and Specialists in Investment.

Following intense round-table discussions with the experts, the tasks for the working groups included analyzing Russia's definition of political, cultural and economic identity, identifying target areas for improvement, and drafting concrete proposals that would address the problems listed. The final session of the conference had the three working groups present their proposals to "The Foundation for Russian Identity"—a fictitious organization of Russian billionaires and philanthropists. In actuality, the foundation was represented by Sara Michael, Public Diplomacy Officer for Academic Exchanges at the U.S. Embassy and Vladimir Shkrobov of the New Civilization Youth Organization (funded by Yukos).

The proposals included the creation of a web portal on Russian culture, a small business investment clearinghouse for regional entrepreneurs, and a series of town meeting style political discussions with

"Would I start working on a project as a follow-up for the conference? Should other alumni join me, I will be happy to implement the idea. Other than that, I am going to use the conference materials in teaching intercultural communication at Orel State University. Besides, since I am going to continue my education in this area, the experience and knowledge gained at the conference will be useful in my future life. The insight into the contemporary cultural, economic, and political problems was especially important for me in order to get a better understanding of the present-day situation.

I really liked the tools that were used to reach consensus and common decision (such as the STP-situation-target-proposal model). This will undoubtedly be useful for me in planning and designing future events and activities. The final presentation session was very interesting and it was a challenge for me to make a presentation in front of the audience."

Sergey Gorbatov '03

One of the major skills that I could sharpen during the conference was the ability to work in a team for a common goal. I apply this skill in group research projects in which I am involved. The conference confirmed my commitment to the importance of community service in a democratic society. I plan to promote this idea among my colleagues and friends and to get involved myself in community service activities."

Milana Strelitsina '00

An outstanding conference we had, didn't we? I loved every single minute spent there, being involved into activities and interaction with other alumni. This experience made a much-needed difference in my life! The gained experience will be very helpful for my better understanding of contemporary Russia and the major societal issues in the country. It became a supporting ground for me to base my arguments on. Brainstorming activities gave me an idea of what projects I could possibly manage myself, and I am willing to apply the gained teamwork skills in my future career."

Sofya Mezhorina '03

Russian alumni celebrate their friendship at the end of the Moscow conference.

high school students and local officials throughout the regions.

Mr. Shkrobov quickly announced that none of the proposals would be funded by his foundation, but that there was definite promise for each project, should the alumni further develop the projects after researching budgetary issues, venues, staffing, and other details. In order to conduct the necessary research and perhaps initiate a pilot project, the alumni are eligible for a \$500 small grant administered by American Councils and funded by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State.

The atmosphere of the conference was so inspiring and productive for the participants that they continued discussing their proposals during the closing reception.

Outcomes

The conference was a very important tool for enhancing alumni cooperation in Russia. The participants shared their ideas on Russian cultural, economic, and political identity and developed concrete projects aimed at eliminating some of the problems. In the course of the conference, the participants developed their facilitation, presentation, discussion and negotiation skills, learned how to organize a conference in the form of an interactive discussion, and established networking and space for future cooperation.

The tangible result of the conference was revealed in projects created by the three sections:

The projects created by the cultural section were:

- Critical thinking development program
- Creating integrated Russian-American educational standards
- Contemporary Russian culture journal
- Regional festival of youth talents

The projects created by the political section were:

- IDI/ЕАЕ (Initiative for Democratic Involvement) Project – Educating young people about the political situation in Russia. Alumni, in cooperation with teachers, would travel to villages and rural districts, giving lectures, tests and taking the most talented students to the regional center to meet with officials.
- Online open forum for youth and teachers
- Democratic café (DC) – discounts given for being able to answer questions about the Constitution; mailbox for feedback from government officials
- Internships at local government

The projects of the economic section were:

- Big money for SMALL BUSINESS (Connecting small businesses with high potential to investors)
- Developing small business centers' knowledge network
- Complaints hotline for business
- Research project aimed at identifying potential regional core competencies

Members of the Political Group work out the details contributing to their country's political identity.



Congratulations to the 2004 University Awards Recipients!

Yaroslava Dolgopyatova – Yaroslava organized a conference entitled “Cultural Research: Challenges for the Third Millennium” at her university in Kyiv from April 30 – May 8, 2004. This conference was dedicated to the examination of literature and culture from a multicultural perspective and had international guests who are involved in the REDES international student organization.

Ivan Skrypka – Using funds from a University Award, Ivan spent much of April and May 2004 travelling throughout Kyiv and other cities of Ukraine to establish and promote a series of UNESCO clubs in the country. Ivan has been a member of UNESCO for 2 ½ years, and believes that Ukrainian youth need to get involved in these youth initiatives at the grassroots level, as UNESCO provides. Ivan visited seven universities and three high schools.

Aibek Karabaev – In May 2004, Aibek was able to open a “Future Farmers of Kyrgyzstan” club at the Kyrgyz Agrarian University, where he studies. The club, which has more of a civic nature than a farming mission, was given a room for student use by the university. Aibek is holding English language lessons and computer training to the 13 club members who have joined and has purchased a used computer and printer with his grant funds.

Olga Zhurzhenko and Yuriy Kurganov worked together to raise several thousand dollars to supplement funds provided by their University Awards to carry out their projects. Olga, a recent graduate of Odessa National University and founder of the Model UN club there, organized a Model UN conference for 80 participants. As a student at Odessa State Economics University, Yuriy held a featured workshop at the Model UN conference en-

titled “The Role of the United Nations in the Current Times.” Students from both universities as well as from around the country attended. Media representatives, CEP officials, and members of the diplomatic corps were also in attendance.

Maksat Koroulov – At the American University of Central Asia, Maksat and several other students in his debate club were able to use University Awards funds to host a debate tournament for 71 students from the five countries of Central Asia and Afghanistan in late March 2004. Participants of the debate tournament had an opportunity to discuss WTO membership issues, the threat of terrorism to regional security, political bargaining processes in Central Asian countries and the influence of global superpowers in the Central Asian region.

Small Grants Program for Eurasia Undergraduate Alumni: “University Awards Program”

American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS under the auspices of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State have initiated a small grants program for alumni of the Eurasian Undergraduate Program. The University Awards Program is designed to support alumni leadership initiatives on their home university campuses that further the objectives of the Eurasian Undergraduate Program, such as community outreach, cultural exchange and other educational activities, and enrich campus life for all students.

WHO: Eurasian Undergraduate Alumni

WHAT: Grants up to \$500 each

WHEN: Open deadline while grant funds last

HOW: Find an application form on www.americancouncils.org or visit your local American Councils office to pick up a form.

ECA Small Grants Program

The ECA Alumni Small Grants Program was piloted by IREX in Feb-

ruary 1999. The program is funded by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and is designed to enable alumni of ECA programs to increase the impact on their home communities by providing funding for individual projects that further the goals of their original programs in the United States. Grants have been awarded to alumni to organize community service projects, publish self-authored books and materials, invite US colleagues to Eurasia for collaborative projects, make research trips within Eurasia, and organize and/or attend regional seminars and conferences. IREX has administered six rounds of the program to date. Alumni of the following ECA-sponsored programs are eligible to apply:

- * Eurasia Undergraduate Exchange Program (formerly the FSA Undergraduate Program)
- * Regional Scholar Exchange Program (RSEP)
- * Freedom Support Act Fellowships in Contemporary Issues (CI)
- * Russian-US Young Leadership Fellows for Public Service Program (YLF)

PURPOSE

The purpose of the ECA Alumni Small Grants Program is to further the professional development of ECA alumni. Grants are a maximum of \$5,000, and allow alumni to do the following:

- * Initiating a public or community service program;
- * Launching a pilot program at an nongovernmental organization or academic institution;
- * Organizing training programs or conferences for professional colleagues and/or other alumni;
- * Funding travel of U.S. colleagues to eligible Eurasian countries for conferences, training programs and professional collaboration;
- * Development and publication of curricula, textbooks, or related reference or educational materials;
- * Publication of public information pamphlets or brochures; and
- * Conducting any other projects judged by the selection committee or ECA to be in the interest of program goals.

The application is posted on our website: <http://www.irex.org/programs/asgp/index.asp>

The deadline for submissions will be in October 2004. All the application materials should be sent to the following address electronically: asgp@irex.org. A copy of the application should also be submitted to your local IREX office.

Local Initiative Grants Program (LIGP)

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State is pleased to announce the Alumni Local Initiative Grants Program (LIGP), which was established to assist former participants of the Eurasian Undergraduate Program, Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program, Junior Faculty Development Program (JFDP), and Partners in Education (PiE) to contribute to the social, economic and political development of their countries.

WHO: ECA alumni of the programs names above, including Eurasian Undergraduate Alumni

WHAT: Grants up to \$5000 each

WHEN: February 2005

HOW: See application form on www.americancouncils.org or visit your local American Councils office to pick up a form.

